(b)'Land' and its 'title' being State subjects, it is for State Governments to take steps for implementation of initiatives envisaged in the NUHHP, 2007. The Policy has been widely publicized and has been forwarded to all States/Union Territories as well as to various Ministries of the Central Government and other implementing agencies.

(c)The NUHHP, 2007 focused on development of green field towns and integrated urban housing extension of existing towns with complementary infrastructure to accommodate growing urban population. It also seeks to encourage State/UT Governments and Local authorities to formulate and implement poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes.

Shortage of houses

3307. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of more than 25 million housing units in urban cities and over 95 per cent housing shortage is related to the economically weaker sections of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is considering to bring any comprehensive scheme with the consultation of Planning Commission for housing to the urban poor in the country;

(d) if so, the details of such housing scheme; and

(e) the target fixed under the scheme and by when it would be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) and (b) According to the estimation of a Technical Group constituted by this Ministry for assessment of the urban housing shortage at the end of the Tenth Five Year Plan, the total housing shortage in the country is 24.71 million dwelling units. Out of this, the shortage in respect of Economically Weaker Section (EWS) accounts for 21.78 million dwelling units.

(c) to (e) A provision of Rs. 95 crores has been made for an Interest Subsidy Scheme for housing the urban poor in the current financial year 2008-09. The scheme envisages to provide interest rate subsidy for loans taken by beneficiaries from the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Group (LIG) from public lending institutions and it is expected to cover 4 lakh beneficiaries during the remaining period of the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012).

Migrant workers in Mississippi

3308. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian migrant workers in Mississippi of USA are facing adverse working conditions and also undergoing hostile living conditions;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to bring relief to the workers there;

(c) the number of male and female workers who are facing the wrath of the authorities and public there; and

(d) if not, the reasons for leaving the Indian workers without any protection and prone to abuse?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) As per the reports received from the Indian Mission in USA, 590 Indian workers were recruited and deployed in the yards of M/s Signal International, a marine fabrication company, located at Mississippi and Texas. They had gone to US on H2B visas (Guest Workers Visa programme) valid initially for 10 months, extendable at the discretion of the employer and the US authorities. The workers were aggrieved on account of alleged poor accommodation and amenities, deductions from their salary for accommodation, food, electricity, water and also non-fulfilment of alleged initial commitment of permanent residency status.

(b) to (d) The Indian Mission in USA has approached the US Government to conduct a detailed investigation into the matter and take remedial measures. The Indian Mission has also taken steps to withhold visas from the main US recruiters involved to prevent them from entering India to resume their recruiting operations.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has suspended the license of M/s Dewan Consultants and M/s. S. Mansur & Co., Mumbai, black listed the foreign employer and is also initiating legal action against the Recruiting Agent for violation of Emigration Act, 1983.

According to available information, there are no female workers among the Indian workers recruited by M/s. Signal International.

Money sent by Overseas Indians

3309. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether substantial amount of money had been sent by Overseas Indians and many crores of rupees had been received as emigration deposit from them;

(b) if so, the details including total amount of money sent by Overseas Indians for last five years, year-wise, State-wise, country-wise and category-wise;

(c) if so, the total amount of money received as emigration deposit and total amount of emigration deposits for last three years, year-wise, category-wise;

(d) if so, whether there is any proposal to utilize emigration deposit for welfare of Overseas Indians;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (f) The details of private remittances received through transfer during the last five years is as under:

Year	In US $ million	In Rs. Crore
2003-04	18885	86764
2004-05	14494	66861
2005-06	24102	106860
2006-07	27195	122635
2007-08*	27891	112407

*(up to Dec. 07)